

Group Discussion Guide: Dear Church | September 18, 2022

Like last week, use the **Prayer of Humility** below to help center your time together on God. To do so, send the prayer out to your group (via text, email, GroupMe, etc.) so everyone has access to it. Then, give your group a few moments to pray in silence and respond to the prompts.

“Lord, I ask that You would prepare my heart for our meeting today.”

“Help me to see each member as You see them.”

*Recall the name and face of each individual in the group.
Ask for God’s help to see each one for who they are, without judgment.*

“Help me to hear each member in truth.”

*As you think of each individual, ask God for the ability to listen intently.
Acknowledge any personal struggles or personality conflicts with others.
Talk these struggles or conflicts over with God.
Ask for a way to listen without hindrance.*

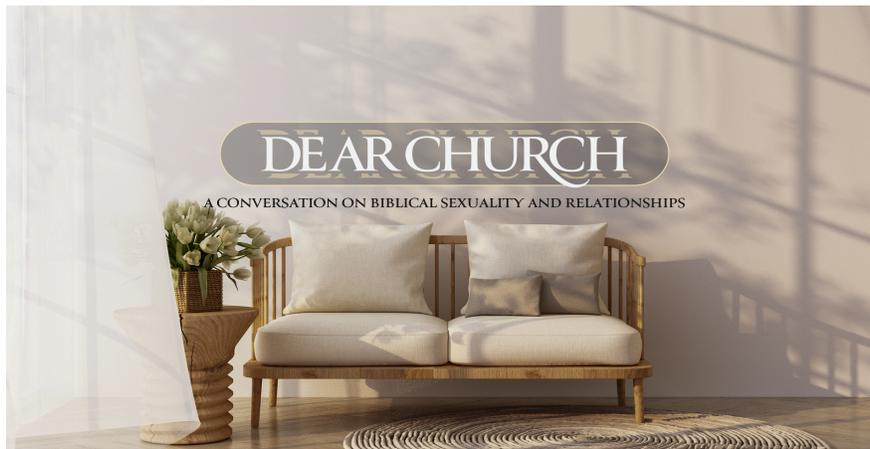
“Help me to respond in love.”

*Affirm your desire for God to guide the meeting.
Admit your limitations to fix the problems and struggles of others.
Acknowledge your inability to fully understand any one person’s story.
Ask God to draw each member closer to His love through the meeting.*

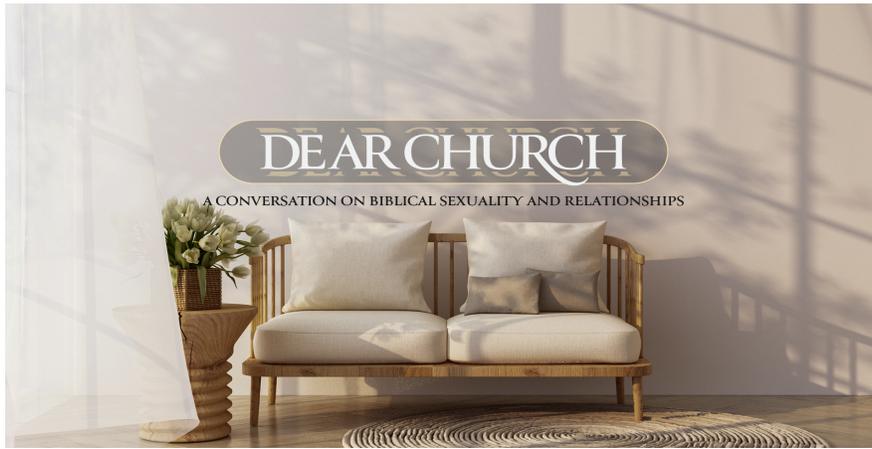
Once you’ve finished praying, as the host, pray aloud for your group time.

Read Scripture and debrief the sermon (30 minutes).

Select a few of these questions to help you discuss the sermon. You may even come up with a few questions that would be good for your specific group to discuss.



- Like each week, assess the posture you found yourself in as you received Sunday's message on sexual orientation. Did you sense openness in yourself, or were you closed-off? Explain.
- How proximal is this specific conversation to your own life? Do you have friends or family that identify as same sex attracted? How does your level of proximity to this topic affect how you come to this conversation?
- Imagine what it must be like as a same sex attracted Christian in a culture that tends to idolize marriage, knowing that if you hold to your Christian beliefs, the prospect of marital intimacy is no longer possible. What does that feel like?
- How would you describe your view of homosexuality? What do you think has informed that view (especially in relation to some of the historical analysis that Dan shared in his sermon regarding this topic)?
- Based on your answers above, how do you see Scripture confronting or confirming your view?
- **Read Genesis 1:27-28.** What two sexes did God make in these passages? According to **Genesis 1**, what commands does God give the first humans?
- **Read Genesis 2:18.** How does this passage describe the human God will make for Adam? How does that reality shape our conversation on sexual orientation?
- **Read Romans 1:21-27.** In this passage, Paul uses same sex behavior as a symptom of larger problems that he expresses in verses 21-25. What are the issues that Paul is addressing in those verses?
- **Lastly, read 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and Leviticus 20:13.** In his sermon, Dan said that these two passages relate. Do you remember how so? Explain.
- What do you think our role is in relating to people who are same sex attracted? Does your answer to that change based on whether they're followers of Jesus? Does your answer change based on whether they're practicing same sex behavior?
- Pertaining to the above question, how does God's truth play into this? How does His love? How about His grace?
- In his message, Dan talked about how we can respond to the LGB community by prompting us with four considerations: (1) Rich relationships; (2) True discipleship; (3) Encompassing wisdom; and (4) Family support. Which of these are most lacking in your own life? What might be holding you back from incorporating it into your life?
- How can our church become a haven of loving relationship with and for same sex attracted people? How does that idea make you feel?
- What lingering questions do you have around this topic?



Take some time to talk through this case study together and answer the questions that follow (30 minutes).

JOSH'S STORY

Josh is 16-years-old and he's been going to The Creek with his family since he was 5 years old. Over the years, you've laughed with Josh and watched him grow. You've had a decent relationship with him and have loved seeing him week to week at church. He's always been kind but has also been shy. For the past year, though, you have noticed that Josh avoids eye contact with you and really doesn't look happy to be at church. You learn from your daughter that Josh has come out as gay on TikTok and said that he is "sick and tired of the bullying and the judgment." He came out soon after a cluster of LGBTQ+ teen suicides around the nation. The church wasn't aware of these deaths even though they were covered extensively through social media. Josh's parents know about his sexuality but haven't reached out to any church leaders for guidance or counsel. Josh seems to use TikTok as a place to rail against the church. He describes the church as an isolating and hateful place. He says his parents never want to talk about anything. If he had the choice, he wouldn't go to church at all; he's waiting to turn 18 so he can be on his own and stop attending church altogether. You reach out to Josh, and he says he's willing to have coffee with you.

- What are some significant aspects of Josh's story that you should think through?
- How should you be (or what should you do or not do) during your meeting with Josh?
- What do the next steps of discipleship look like for Josh?
- How do you help Josh feel welcomed and loved by God?

Come back together as a large group. Finish with intercessory prayer (10 minutes).

Like each week, finish your group session with prayer. You might designate someone in your group to write down everyone's prayer requests and then send them to the whole group for everyone to be praying about through the week.

- What is on your heart that you need prayer for?
- Who in your life needs prayer?

Have someone close your time together by interceding for the requests that were shared.